

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois

Application ID: 14AC157312

Program Name: TW MORE: Making Opportunities for Reading Enrichment

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

##### Strengths:

The applicant provided relevant data—such as, demographic data, community assessments, and surveys—to demonstrate a need for financial literacy and job skills development training for economically-disadvantaged parents in the targeted area.

The applicant uses good data to describe the statement of need.

The applicant provides a compelling case of the needs of Head Start families in relation to their employment, education, and training needs.

The applicant's description of the target communities indicates that there is a need for financial literacy and economic supports.

The applicant cites relevant data from the Head Start Report for Chicago, state, and national entities such as the Chicago Department of Social Services and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Center for Literacy to document the need.

The applicant clearly demonstrates how the use of 13 full-time and eight minimum-time Members will enhance its ability to offer needed education and employment readiness training for 1,300 economically-disadvantaged parents, and the results of these services will increase the employability and financial literacy for those parents. For example, Members will serve as facilitators for various training sessions, such as creating a resume, interview techniques, and computer skills.

The applicant cites relevant non-experimental sources to provide documentation of the effective use of AmeriCorps volunteers to address and try to solve community problems listed in the RFP.

Based on the data from non-experimental studies, the applicant establishes a well-defined plan to assign AmeriCorps

volunteers throughout the program areas of job readiness and financial literacy. Furthermore, the applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of how to assess the impact of the AmeriCorps volunteers through measurable indicators of parent progress.

The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will support the financial literacy and employment readiness workshops of the overall program model.

The applicant demonstrates a three-year track record of successfully meeting performance measures for providing financial literacy training services, job training skill development, and GED preparation for economically-disadvantaged parents.

The applicant has described success (in great detail) meeting the Making Opportunities for Reading Enrichment (MORE) goals and performance targets for the last three years.

The applicant demonstrates past experience in solving the identified problem as evidenced by its ability to meet or exceed program measures in the provision of services for the past three years. For example, the applicant has exceeded program reach numbers for financial literacy services. The applicant reached 3,783 (unduplicated) economically-disadvantaged parents, while its goal number was only 3,625.

Ninety percent of parents indicated increased knowledge based upon a comparison of pre/post assessments, which is 10% over the original goal of 80%.

The applicant's AmeriCorps members provided job training and/or other skills development services for 1,364 parents when the original goal was only 1,260 parents.

The applicant consistently received satisfactory ratings from the Serve Illinois Commission.

#### Weaknesses:

There is not enough detail about what AmeriCorps members would do to support beneficiaries during the ESL and GED workshops.